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Technology Center 2600

We claim:

1. A method of evaluating the conformation of an animal's hoof and lower leg comprising the steps of:

- (a) receiving digital images of the hoof and/or lower leg;
- (b) computing measurements (angles, ratios, lengths, etc) within those images;
- (c) using these measurements to make comparisons between animals, or the same animal a different points in time;
- (d) using these measurements to compute a "score" which specifies how the particular animal conforms to some ideal;
- (e) combining the scores with the comparison set in order to use the "scores" to rank the animals in percentile fashion.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein

- (a) the user is guided to pick certain key 'markers' within the image, and
- (b) biomechanical parameters are computed from the picked 'markers';

~~3. The method of claim 1 wherein the resulting measurements are used to compute a "score" which specifies how the particular animal conforms to some ideal.~~

~~4.3. The method of claim 1 wherein scale markers, visible in the image, are used to allow accurate scaling of length measurements.~~

~~5.4. The method of claim 1 wherein the types of images used are photographs and radiographs.~~

~~6. The method of claim 3 wherein scoring is combined with a comparison set in order to use the "scores" to rank horses in a percentile fashion.~~